



NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**WASILLA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DRUG DISTRIBUTION AND
BEING A FELON IN POSSESSION OF A FIREARM**

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen announced that on May 5, 2008, Damian Allen Nichols, a resident of Wasilla, Alaska, pleaded guilty in federal court to charges of being a felon in possession of a firearm and distribution of cocaine and heroin.

Nichols, age 27, of 7040 Beverly Lakes #2, Wasilla, pleaded guilty to two counts of being a felon in possession of firearms and three counts of distribution of controlled substances before Senior United States District Court Judge James K. Singleton.

In connection with the guilty plea, Assistant United States Attorney Bryan Schroder advised the court that Nichols had sold cocaine and heroin on three separate occasions in December 2007. In early 2008, officers served a search warrant on Nichols' residence, finding firearms. Nichols is prohibited from possessing firearms because of two previous felony convictions. Nichols had also possessed firearms earlier in 2007.

Judge Singleton scheduled sentencing for July 21, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. The law provides for a total sentence of 20 years in prison, a fine of \$1,000,000, or both. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed is based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the criminal history, if any, of the defendant.

Pending sentencing, the court continued the incarceration of Nichols.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; the Mat-Su Drug Task Force; and the Wasilla Police Department conducted the investigation that led to the prosecution of Nichols.

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